Tafsir Ibn Kathir

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لاَ رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah

Al-Kawthar

Revealed in Al-Madinah, and They also say in Makkah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَـنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنَـكَ الْكَوْثَرَ

108:1 Verily, We have granted you Al-Kawthar.

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ

108:2 Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice.

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الاٌّبْتَرُ

108:3 For he who hates you, he will be cut off.

Muslim, Abu Dawud and An-Nasa'i, all recorded from Anas that he said,

> "While we were with the Messenger of Allah in the Masjid, he dozed off into a slumber. Then he lifted his head smiling. We said, `O Messenger of Allah! What has caused you to laugh' He said, Verily, a Surah was just revealed to me. Then he recited,

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ (١)
فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ
إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الأَبْتَرُ

Verily, We have granted you **Al-Kawthar**.
Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice.
For he who hates you, he will be cut off.

Then he said,

Do you all know what is **Al-Kawthar**?

We said, `Allah and His Messenger know best.'

He said,

فَإِنَّهُ نَهَرٌ وَعَدَنِيهِ رَبِّي عَزَّ وَجَلَّ،عَلَيْهِ خَيْرٌ كَثِيرٌ،
هُوَ حَوْضٌ تَرِدُ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ،
آنِيَتُهُ عَدَدُ النُّجُومِ فِي السَّمَاءِ،
فَيُخْتَلَجُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْهُمْ فَأَقُولُ: رَبِّ إِنَّهُ مِنْ أُمَّتِي،
فَيَقُولُ: إِنَّكَ لَا تَدْرِي مَا أَحْدَثَ بَعْدَكَ

Verily, it is a river that my Lord, the Mighty and Majestic, has promised me and it has abundant goodness.

It is a pond where my **Ummah** will be brought to on the Day of Judgement.

Its containers are as numerous as the stars in the sky.

Then a servant of Allah from among them will be (prevented from it) and I will say:

> "O Lord! Verily, he is from my **Ummah** (followers).''

Then He (Allah) will say:

> "Verily, you do not know what he introduced (or innovated) after you.''

This is the wording of Muslim.

Ahmad recorded this Hadith from Muhammad bin Fudayl, who reported from Al-Mukhtar bin Fulful, who reported it from Anas bin Malik.

Imam Ahmad also recorded from Anas that the Messenger of Allah said,

دَخَلْتُ الْجَنَّةَ فَإِذَا أَنَا بِنَهْرٍ حَافَتَاهُ خِيَامُ اللُّؤْلُؤِ،

فَضَرَبْتُ بِيَدِي إِلَى مَا يَجْرِي فِيهِ الْمَاءُ، فَإِذَا مِسْكٌ أَذْفَرُ،

قُلْتُ: مَاهَذَا يَا جِبْرِيلُ؟

قَالَ: هَذَا الْكَوْثَرُ الَّذِي أَعْطَاكَهُ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَل

I entered Paradise and I came to a river whose banks had tents made of pearls. So I thrust my hand into its flowing water and found that it was the strongest (smell) of musk. So I asked, "O Jibril! What is this''

He replied,

"This is **Al-Kawthar** which Allah, the Mighty and Majestic has given you.''

Al-Bukhari recorded this in his Sahih, and so did Muslim, on the authority of Anas bin Malik. In their version Anas said, "When the Prophet was taken up to the heaven, he said,

أَتَيْتُ عَلَى نَهْرٍ حَافَتَاهُ قِبَابُ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمُجَوَّفِ فَقُلْتُ: مَا هَذَا يَا جِبْرِيلُ؟ قَالَ: هَذَا الْكَوْثَر

I came to a river whose banks had domes of hollowed pearl. I said: "O Jibril! What is this''

He replied: "This is **Al-Kawthar**.''

This is the wording of Al-Bukhari.

Ahmad recorded from Anas that a man said,

"O Messenger of Allah! What is **Al-Kawthar**?''

He replied,

هُوَ نَهْرٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ أَعْطَانِيهِ رَبِّي،
لَهُوَ أَشَدُّ بَيَاضًا مِنَ اللَّبَنِ، وَأَحْلَى مِنَ الْعَسَلِ،
فِيهِ طُيُورٌ أَعْنَاقُهَا كَأَعْنَاقِ الْجُزُرُ

It is a river in Paradise which my Lord has given me. It is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. There are birds in it whose necks are (long) like carrots.

Umar said, "O Messenger of Allah! Verily, they (the birds) will be beautiful.''

The Prophet replied,

آكِلُهَا أَنْعَمُ مِنْهَا يَا عُمَرَ

The one who eats them (i.e., the people of Paradise) will be more beautiful than them, O `Umar.

Al-Bukhari recorded from Sa`id bin Jubayr that Ibn Abbas said about **Al-Kawthar**,

"It is the good which Allah gave to him (the Prophet).''

Abu Bishr said,

"I said to Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Verily, people are claiming that it is a river in Paradise.'''

Sa`id replied,

`The river which is in Paradise is part of the goodness which Allah gave him.'''

Al-Bukhari also recorded from Sa`id bin Jubayr that Ibn Abbas said,

"**Al-Kawthar** is the abundant goodness.''

This explanation includes the river and other things as well. Because the word **Al-Kawthar** comes from the word **Kathrah** (abundance) and it **(Al-Kawthar)**

linguistically means an abundance of goodness. So from this goodness is the river (in Paradise).

Imam Ahmad recorded from Ibn Umar that the Messenger of Allah said,

الْكَوْثَرُ نَهْرٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ حَافَتَاهُ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ، وَالْمَاءُ يَجْرِي عَلَى اللُّؤْلُؤِ، وَمَاؤُهُ أَشَدُّ بَيَاضًا مِنَ اللَّبَنِ، وَأَحْلَى مِنَ الْعَسَلِ

Al-Kawthar is a river in Paradise whose banks are of gold and it runs over pearls. Its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey.

This Hadith was recorded in this manner by At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir.

At-Tirmidhi said, "**Hasan Sahih**.''

Then Allah says,

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ (٢)

Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice.

meaning, `just as We have given you the abundant goodness in this life and the Hereafter -- and from that is the river that has been described previously -- then make your obligatory and optional prayer, and your sacrifice (of animals) solely and sincerely for your Lord.

Worship Him alone and do not associate any partner with him. And sacrifice pronouncing His Name alone, without ascribing any partner to Him.'

This is as Allah says,

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلاَتِى وَنُسُكِى وَمَحْيَاىَ وَمَمَاتِى للَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَـلَمِينَ

لاَ شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَاْ أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

Say:

"Verily, my **Salah**, my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of all that exists.

He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims.'' (6:162-163)

Ibn `Abbas, Ata,' Mujahid, Ikrimah and Al-Hasan all said,

"This means with this the **Budn** should be sacrificed.''

Qatadah, Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi, Ata Al-Khurasani, Al-Hakam, Isma`il bin Abi Khalid and others from the Salaf have all said the same.

This is the opposite of the way of the idolators, prostrating to other than Allah and sacrificing in other than His Name.

Allah says,

وَلاَ تَأْكُلُواْ مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ

And do not eat from what Allah's Name has not been pronounced over, indeed that is **Fisq**. (6:121)

The Enemy of the Prophet is Cut Off

Allah says,

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ (٣)

For he who hates you, he will be cut off.

meaning, `indeed he who hates you, O Muhammad, and he hates what you have come with of guidance, truth, clear proof and manifest light, he is the most cut off, meanest, lowliest person who will not be remembered.

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr and Qatadah all said,

"This Ayah was revealed about Al-As bin Wa'il. Whenever the Messenger of Allah would be mentioned (in his presence) he would say,

`Leave him, for indeed he is a man who is cut off having no descendants. So when he dies he will not be remembered.'

Therefore, Allah revealed this Surah.''

Shamir bin `Atiyah said,

"This Surah was revealed concerning `Uqbah bin Abi Mu`ayt.''

Ibn `Abbas and `Ikrimah have both said,

"This Surah was revealed about Ka`b bin Al-Ashraf and a group of the disbelievers of the Quraysh.''

Al-Bazzar recorded that Ibn Abbas said,

"Ka`b bin Al-Ashraf came to Makkah and the Quraysh said to him,

`You are the leader of them (the people). What do you think about this worthless man who is cut off from his people He claims that he is better than us while we are the people of the place of pilgrimage, the people of custodianship (of the Ka`bah), and the people who supply water to the pilgrims.'

He replied, `You all are better than him.'

So Allah revealed, " إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الأَبْتَرُ (For he who hates you, he will be cut off.)''

This is how Al-Bazzar recorded this incident and its chain of narration is authentic.

It has been reported that Ata' said,

"This Surah was revealed about Abu Lahab when a son of the Messenger of Allah died. Abu Lahab went to the idolators and said,

`Muhammad has been cut off (i.e., from progeny) tonight.'

So concerning this Allah revealed, " إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الأَبْتَرُ (For he who hates you, he will be cut off.)''

As-Suddi said,

> "When the male sons of a man died the people used to say, `He has been cut off.' So, when the sons of the Messenger of Allah died they said, `Muhammad has been cut off.'

Thus, Allah revealed, "إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الأَبْتَرُ (For he who hates you, he will be cut off.)''

So they thought in their ignorance that if his sons died, his remembrance would be cut off.

Allah forbid! To the contrary, Allah preserved his remembrance for all the world to see, and He obligated all the servants to follow his Law. This will continue for all of time until the Day of Gathering and the coming of the Hereafter. May the blessings of Allah and His peace be upon him forever until the Day of Assembling.

This is the end of the Tafsir of Surah **Al-Kawthar**, and all praise and blessings are due to Allah.